

REMARKS

The present Amendment cancels claims 5-8 and leaves claims 1-4 and 9-18 unchanged. Therefore, the present application has pending claims 1-4 and 9-18.

Applicants note that the Examiner did not consider the Information Disclosure Statement submitted on June 22, 2001 along with the filing of the present application. A copy of said Information Disclosure Statement is attached herewith for consideration by the Examiner. The Examiner is respectfully requested to indicate that the references cited therein have been considered.

Claims 5-8 stand rejected under 35 USC §101 being that the Examiner alleges that the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter; claims 5 and 7 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Fujii (U.S. Patent No. 6,405,151); and claims 6 and 8 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fujii in view of Rohner (U.S. Patent No. 6,184,887). As indicated above, claims 5-8 were canceled. Therefore, these rejections are rendered moot. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

It should be noted that the cancellation of claims 5-8 was not intended nor should it be considered as an agreement on Applicants part that claims 5-8 are directed to non-statutory subject matter or that claims 5-8 recite features taught by Fujii and Rohner or any of the other references of record whether taken individually or in combination with each other. The cancellation of claims 5-8 was simply intended to expedite prosecution of the present application.

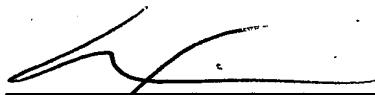
Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's indication in the Office Action that claims 1-4 and 9-18 are allowed.

Since no other outstanding issues remain Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance based on claims 1-4 and 9-18. Accordingly, early allowance of the present application based on claims 1-4 and 9-18 is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (500.40254X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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